



## **Forum Summary: Access**

**February 4, 2009**

**Forum No. 1**

**Attendees:** Margaret Barrette (Facilitator), Mark Mauren, Craig Partridge, Robert, Dengel, Tami Ishler, Jana Greer, Gerald Hodge, Arlene Brooks, Bill Koss, Elizabeth Lunney, Darrell Wallace (in place of Jeff Chapman), Lindell Haggin, Tom Perry, John Lang, Jim Eychaner (in place of Kaleen Cottingham), Paul Dalmer, Dale Hom

Sustainable Recreation Work Group participants attended via conference call and GoToMeeting®

Public participants listened via conference call

### **Agenda:**

- Welcome and meeting objectives
- Review GoToMeeting® techniques for all callers.
- Review policy context for access.
- Review background document on access and availability of information:
- Brainstorm
- Plan for next meeting
- Seed back
- Wrap up

### **Policy Context for Access**

DNR staff provided the following questions to help participants frame the policy context for this discussion.

- What does public access on state lands mean?
- What is the practical nature of providing access?
- What are the access opportunities now, and what should they be in the future?

Throughout the meetings on this issue, participants are encouraged to consider these questions and attempt to provide reasonable answers. This will not only guide the discussion but will assist in developing preliminary recommendations that will be brought to the full work group.

## **Background on Access:**

*Presented by Robert Dengel, DNR*

- Current DNR recreation opportunities
- Scope of allowed access
- How access has changed over the years
- Costs associated with acquiring, maintaining and building access
- Opportunities for coordination between entities
- Additional information and public input regarding access
- Future demand for recreational access

## **Online Survey**

DNR offered an online survey to learn more from recreation users and stakeholders about access and the availability of information relating to recreation. We heard from 870 people.

A link to the public comments will be available the week of February 16 on the Sustainable Recreation Work Group Web page. Follow the link to “Forums.”

[http://www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/RecreationPlanning/Pages/amp\\_rec\\_sustainable\\_recreation.aspx](http://www.dnr.wa.gov/RecreationEducation/Topics/RecreationPlanning/Pages/amp_rec_sustainable_recreation.aspx)

The most common themes from the online survey are:

- Most survey participants get their information about access opportunities through word of mouth or from Web sites maintained by recreation organizations or clubs.
- On the whole, participants said they want information that relates to openings and closures of trails and recreation options once a visitor gets to a site (i.e. campsites, or other facilities).
- Survey participants said they preferred to hear about information related to access from DNR’s Web site followed by e-mail notifications and sign postings.

## **Feedback from Work Group participants:**

Additional information requests

- Information regarding “land-locked” parcels and their contribution to recreation.

Brainstorm Ideas

- Cautioned expressed about increasing level of opportunity and access without increasing management capabilities.
- Current level of access is not adequate.
- Comprehensive recreation planning that is science-based, with broad community participation is necessary —addressing capacity, environmental issues, liability, unauthorized trails, increased coordination within DNR and among adjacent land-owners
- Tahuya planning program provides a planning model.
- Day and dispersed uses need to be considered.
- Consider impacts to large wildlife from road closures.
- Need to provide access opportunities from urban centers.

- Increased access will require increased coordination.
- Consider the relationship between access and timber sales. Is it possible that roads built for timber sales could be also used to support recreation?
- Conduct inventory of user-built trails. Don't just dismiss all of the existing trails.
- User-built trails should include the ability to plan, ability to construct and the ability to maintain.
- Evaluate user built trails—are they satisfying a need? Are they causing environmental damage?
- One-size-fits-all approach doesn't exist. Consider a combination of methods to determine long-term status of user-built trails—carrying capacity, physical, resource, agency and social needs must be considered.
- Consider where user groups would like to have access.
- Consider physical carrying capacity, ecosystem carrying capacity, and institutional carrying capacity.
- Separation of uses may be well received by users, but must consider terrain.
- Consider what impact different uses have on resources and adjusting uses to the landscape.

### **Process Ideas**

To help callers more easily follow the meeting:

- Participants should state their name prior to speaking.
- Facilitator should re-state questions, especially those that are asked from within the room.

### **Next Steps**

- Materials in response to additional requests, regarding land-locked lands, will be sent to forum participants in late February.
- DNR staff has been developing a SharePoint site for forum participants to share information on access options and other work group business. More information on this will be shared shortly.
- The next forum discussion on access will be from 1:30 to 3 p.m. on March 4.